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CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE LECTURE METHOD OF TEACHING IN LEGAL EDUCATION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRESS

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I. ABSTRACT

The lecture teaching method is one of the useful methods in law teaching. In this teaching method, lecturers provide their legal knowledge to the students systematically and in a structured manner. The lecture method is useful to explain complex legal concepts, principles, and theories in an easily understandable manner. This method is cost cost-friendly method. Because it does not require any special tools or materials, it needs only minimal basic work, allowing lecturers to feel comfortable in teaching because they are the only source in the lecture method of leaching.

However, the lecturers should make preparation work before the lecture. He needs to make plans for executing good lectures and he should ensure himself as the updated person. Updated lectures are vital in legal education because laws are in dynamic nature. The lecturer is required to provide current updates to students while teaching the subject matters which are provided by the syllabus of the particular institution where the teaching going on.

Providing updated legal information to students is very easy in this teaching method because this method only relies upon the lecturers, not upon the teaching materials. This teaching method is in the same manner as in the past. No updates are taken in this teaching method. In this world, everything is subject to change except change. The lecture method of teaching also needs to be updated to provide legal knowledge to law students. Various suggestions are drawn in this paper for developing the progress of the lecture method of teaching in legal education.

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II. KEYWORDS

Lecture Method, Legal Education, Interdisciplinary Approach, Bar Council of India.

III. INTRODUCTION

The Lecture method is known as one of the oldest methods of teaching. In this method, the lecturer presents the knowledge of the subject to the students in a systematic and structured manner. Further, the lecturer explains all the key aspects of the study clearly. This teaching method is considered an effective method of teaching in legal education. It was widely used by teachers throughout the world to teach law as well as non-law subjects. This paper reviews the various aspects of the lecture method of teaching.

IV. LECTURE

The term '*Lecture*' means, "a talk that is given to a group of people to teach them about a particular subject, often as part of a university or college course.[2]". By referring to the Cambridge Dictionary, it can be understood as, "a formal talk on a serious subject given to a group of people, especially students.[3]". Additionally, it can be understood as, "a discourse given before an audience or class, especially for instruction.[4]". Further, Collins Dictionary says, "A lecture is a talk someone gives in order to teach people about a particular subject, usually at a university or college.[5]".

Based on the above definitions the Lecture method of teaching can be understood as, the "Sharing of Knowledge about a particular subject to the students by the teacher through the formal talk and formal interaction".

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[2] lecture noun - Definition, pictures, pronunciation and usage notes, Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/lecture_1?q=lecture (last visited Dec 26, 2024).

[3] Cambridge Dictionary, Lecture, English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lecture (last visited Dec 26, 2024).

[4] Definition of lecture, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lecture (last visited Dec 26, 2024).

[5] lecture, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/lecture (last visited Dec 26, 2024).

A. The Lecture Method is an Age-Old Teaching Method

The lecture method of teaching is one of the traditional methods of teaching. Many historical recorded incidents prove the lecture method as the oldest method. For example, the Greek philosopher Plato delivered his teaching to his students in the way of lecture method. Around 387 BCE, he established a renowned philosophical institution in the grove dedicated to the Greek hero Academus, situated just beyond the city's walls.

In this open-air Academy[6], Plato engaged in the delivery of lectures in the open air, attracting students from across the Greek world who sought to benefit from his teachings and philosophical insights. This setting not only facilitated the exchange of ideas but also fostered a vibrant intellectual community dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom.

Aristotle the student of Plato. At the age of 50, he established his educational institution in a gymnasium known as the Lyceum in 335 BC, located just outside of Athens. He developed an extensive library and assembled a distinguished group of research scholars, with whom he engaged in thoughtful discussions. Unlike the Academy, which functioned as a more exclusive enclave, the Lyceum operated with a more open space; many of the lectures were accessible to the general public and offered without charge.[7].

This inclusive approach not only enhanced the dissemination of knowledge but also encouraged broader community engagement in philosophical discourse. Most of the religious teachings and sermons are in the lecture form. Considering some examples for it makes it very clear.

The very first preaching of the Siddhartha Gautama, most commonly referred to as the Buddha in the lecture form. 6th century BCE was marked by historians as the time of that first sermon. All his moral teachings are in lecture form where the Buddha sat

[6] Christian Zapata, Plato - Life, Philosophy & Quotes, HISTORY, Nov. 9, 2009, https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-greece/plato (last visited Dec 26, 2024).
[7] Anthony J.P. Kenny & Anselm H. Amadio, Aristotle, Encyclopedia Britannica, May 27, 1999, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Aristotle (last visited Dec 26, 2024).

taller place than his disciples and started his moral preaching to them, while his preaching all his disciples sat around him.[8]. Likewise, Mahavira delivered his First Sermon on the Vipulachala mountain.

Sermons of Jesus Christ are in the form of a lecture method of moral teaching. One of the famous sermons of Jesus Christ is the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon, Lord Jesus Christ delivered his moral teaching in lecture form. The Holy Bible describes this incident in detail. Referring to the Mathew Gospel chapter 5 verse 1 of the Holy Bible, the multitude of people followed Christ, he went up to the Mount of Beatitudes, sat there along with that multitude of people, and started his moral lecture. On another occasion, Jesus Christ delivered his moral lecture while he sat on the boat in the lake Galilee. All the listeners of that lecture stood on the shore of Lake Galilee.[9].

Coming to the 13th century, books were exceedingly rare commodities, meticulously handcrafted and illustrated by monks. These texts were often created from fragments or compilations of earlier, highly valuable scrolls from ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, or they were translations of Arabic works, as much of the written documentation had been lost in Europe during the Dark Ages following the fall of the Roman Empire.

Consequently, a university often possessed only a single copy of a book, which might have been the sole remaining copy in existence. This scarcity rendered the library and its collection vital to the university's prestige. Professors frequently had to borrow the sole available text from the library, reading directly from it to their students, who would dutifully transcribe their notes based on the lecture.[10]. This process not only highlighted the importance of the library as a center of learning but also underscored the collaborative effort involved in the transmission of knowledge during this period.

[8] Buddha Preaching the First Sermon at Sarnath, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/38123 (last visited Dec 26, 2024).
[9] The Holy Bible, Luke 5:1-3, (King James Version, 1769)
[10] Lesson 5, Theories of Learning: The Origins of the Lecture, https://tell.colvee.org/mod/book/view.php?id=647&chapterid=1115 (last visited Dec 26, 2024).

B. Concept of lecture method

As a widely utilized approach, it enables teachers to cover subject matter within a limited timeframe to a large number of listeners at the same time. This method of approach is in the character 'teacher-centric'. The teacher is the primary person in this method. All communications and knowledge sharing comes from him to the vast number of listeners.

Teachers are being authoritative in it. They are only engaged in one-way communication. Primarily they are providing knowledge sharing in the form of lectures. Sometimes, they express it in writing form along with lectures. This method is considered the oldest instructional methods approach employed by educators in the classroom. Explaining all the legal concepts, principles, theories, and subject matters is effective in this teaching method.

Students are listening to the lecture passively. They take notes and ask doubts while lecturing. This assures their participation in legal learning. However, such participation is minimal. The principle behind the lecture method is the teacher who knows the particular subject can impart such knowledge to the listeners during the lecture. The lecture method is used to transfer basic theoretical knowledge to listeners through lectures[11].

Even though this method minimizes the interactions of students in the learning, the use of question-and-answer interactions and asking doubts make students engage themselves in the lecture. Complex concepts, case laws, and statutes are clearly explained by the lecture by using his voice modulations, impersonating various characters, adjusting his physical stance, and using the simple blackboard or whiteboard.

The lecturers already passed out from the place where they will lecture. So, they can know what difficulties they faced during their classes. It makes them adopt new strategies for the legal education of the students. Further, the usage of facial expressions, gestures, and vocal tones makes lecturers connect themselves to the

[11] Mona Purohit, Legal Education & Research Methodology 13 (Central Law Publications 2014).

students. It enhances understanding and good learning. The lecture method of teaching leaves the fire of learning in the minds of students towards the law. Once they get interested in the subject matter that is lectured to them, they will eagerly acquire the knowledge from the lecturers as well as from any sources.

It is a very useful method to make interest among the students towards the legal education. The lecture method increases the listening ability of the students. Listening is a vital ability that all legal professionals should have. Once the students come through the lecture method of teaching. Their listening skills will automatically increase.

V. MERITS OF LECTURE METHOD OF TEACHING

- **Very effective method for a large number of students** - In the lecture method, the lecturer only plays an active role, listeners only need to listen to the lecture. It can be effectively used by any number of law students. Few or many do not make any difference in it. All listeners will get an equal amount of knowledge from the lecturer. Even one listener sits before the lecturer or a thousand listeners sit before the lecturer acquires the same knowledge.
- **Usable in any kind of place** - As previously explained under the topic of the Age-Old teaching method, the lecture method does not require any special kind of surroundings. In ancient times, the lecture method was used in the forest, under a tree, on the mountain, on the ship, and in whatever place educators and listeners gathered. The hungry mind will get a feast from the educator at whatever place.
- **No need for any special instruments** - The lecture method of law teaching is a traditional and teacher-centric approach. Where the teacher shared his knowledge with students in the way of their understandable manner. The lecturer explains all the theories, concepts, and principles of the law in his own way of presentation. Therefore, the lecturer does not depend upon any special type of instrument.

- **No need for learning materials** - Teachers are the only resource in the lecture method so no need for any learning materials. All his words which are related to the study become the resource material. Notes which are taken by the students during the lecture will become the learning material for them. They can utilize it later to refresh their mind or clarify their doubts by themselves.
- **No need and use of lab** - This method of teaching is mostly in the form of an oral presentation by the educator and also there is no use of a lab in legal teaching, most of the subject matters of the law are based on the theoretical and philosophical aspects. Those can be effectively educatable by the lecturers.
- **Direct share of the knowledge of the teacher to the students** - This approach is centralized with the teacher alone. His expertise and experience allow him to present complex legal principles, statutes, and case laws in an organized manner. Whatever he shares in the lecture is direct from his experience, so there is a clear share of direct knowledge of the teacher to students.
- **Effective method to wake up the curiosity among the students** - Lectures contain factors to wake up the curiosity among the students like giving problems at the end of the lecture so students to ask for answers within the lecture period. Such questions should be based on the content of the present lecture. While students try to answer such questions, their minds will wake up from listening to critical thinking and it makes them seek more knowledge from the teacher in upcoming lectures. Even the lecturer can use other teaching methods like role-playing method during lectures to create curiosity.
- **Easy method to cover the entire syllabus within a limited time** - The lecture method is very effective in teaching a structured syllabus. It provides the subject matter of course in the form of a foundation in to comprehensive manner. So, it's like the step-by-step learning process. All the subject matters are interlinked. Therefore, teaching the foundation concept indirectly will

help in the teaching of complex concepts. So, the lecture method is effectively covering the syllabus in a limited time.

- **Cost-friendly method of teaching** - The lecturer replaces all the resources and learning materials in this method of teaching. There is no need for any aids, lab, or special instruments. Even a black or whiteboard is optional for it. But some other methods, like the seminar method, clinical method, and stimulation method need instruments. So, it's a very cost-effective method of teaching.
- **Effectively provide the insights of the legal concept** - For lying foundation of legal education to the students. The lecture method is only the effective method because, in some methods of teaching, prior knowledge about the concept of law is required for students to avail of the present study. For example, discussion method, prior knowledge is needed for students to engage in discussions. So, the students who have no prior knowledge have no scope in it.
- **An easy method to explain complex legal provisions and aspects** - The teacher who already comes from the background of the legal profession. He has theoretical knowledge very well. So, he knew which principles or statutes were very hard to understand for students. Therefore, he can easily adopt new ways of presentation to teach those principles and statutes in his lecture for their easy understanding.
- **A suitable method for passive listeners** - Students only play a passive role in this method of approach; good listeners can get good knowledge from the lecture. Listening is an integrated part of the legal profession. Students who are studying law have the skill to listen passively. It's suitable for law teaching. Further, this method of teaching is improving the listening skills of the listeners.
- **Face-to-face communication enriches the learning process of law** - When teachers make eye-to-eye connections with students, their minds

automatedly focus on the lectures of teachers. Also, all the mischief that students may do during listening will be avoided. So, there are no distractions. Teachers can channel the thought process of the students towards the study by this communication. Enrich learning is assured by him in it.

- **Students can clarify their doubts during the lecture directly from the teacher** - This method of teaching has the scope to stop the lecture in any place where the listeners have doubts about it. The teachers also stop their lectures and clarify those doubts. Afterward, only they proceed further. This method ensures the concepts are clearly understood by the students. Even the lecture can be video recorded for future use.
- **This method provides additional time for the teacher to clarify the doubts of the students** - In case, the teacher does not know the answer to the doubts he can clarify those doubts in upcoming lectures. Because the lecture method of teaching is flexible in this manner. During the additional time, teachers should work out those doubts and come up with answers in the next lecture.
- **Through this method, new subject matter of study can be introduced easily** - Being the teacher-centric approach, the teacher has a wide range of independence in teaching the syllabus to students. It allows teachers to adopt the new aim and content of the study each time. Teachers can teach new concepts and principles of law to make students understand the current study very well. Such concepts and principles do not exist in the syllabus. For example, lecturing the concept of the procedure established under the law in Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, the lecturer can lecture it along with due process of law. Even though it is not existing in the syllabus.
- **Provide a linkage between previous and current studies** - The ultimate role of a lecturer is to make links between his lectures. All current lectures have a link with previous lectures. It is possible in the lecture method. It makes learning systematic.

- **Easy to update the study of the lecture** - Teachers can easily update the study based on current social, economic, political, and legal trends. Because there is no material used for teaching in this method. Teachers' knowledge is only the source of teaching. Therefore, updated teachers can keep their lectures up to date.

VI. DEMERITS OF LECTURE METHOD OF TEACHING

- **No Active Role of Students** - As the teacher-centered method of teaching, the activity of the students is very low. Teachers are active during the lecture but students are only listeners and note writers. This makes it difficult to club with the lecture. Sometimes, even they forget the flow of the study. This makes undesirable results in learning.
- **Individual characteristics of students are neglected** - Not all students have the same capability. Some of them are good at listening, some of them are good at problem-solving and some of them are good at stimulating. Students who are good at problem-solving do not make them unfit for legal education. Even though they are not good at listening. Providing teaching in their interested method of teaching will provide more knowledge to them. However, the lecture method neglects the individual characteristics.
- **Professional usage of language makes it difficult to understand the lecture** - Delivering the lecture by professionally using language makes it difficult to understand. Students from the language course can understand very well but not all the students of law come from the language course background. They can understand the lecturing language but when it is too technical, they cannot understand it.
- **Not able to provide practical knowledge, especially the practical sense of law** - All theoretical and philosophical aspects of law can be effectively taught by lecturers. However, they are unable to give practical knowledge to the students. Because practical knowledge cannot be given in lecture methods of teaching. It can be given in the stimulation method and clinical method of

teaching. So, while teaching procedural laws, the adoption of different method other than the lecture method is inevitable. While engaging in the lecture method of teaching, teachers are unable to get practical knowledge. They are sticking with textbooks alone.

- **Medium of language is always a barrier to native language listeners** - All the academics can decide the medium of the study of law. Legal teaching in India is mostly in the English language. Because most of the sources of law are in English such as statutes, case laws, textbooks, and so on. Lecturing law in English alone is an understanding barrier to native language listeners. Compulsory learning of English is inevitable for them. They take more time to understand the lecture. Bilingual lecture helps them to understand the law very well.
- **The lecture method makes the study monotonous and dry** - In the lecture method of teaching, students are only the listeners. Sometimes they engage to get notes from the lecture. But, most of the time they only listen. One-way communication in the lecture method makes the lecture difficult to understand. Continuously playing the role of listener and having no personal involvement in learning leads to boredom.
- **Teachers are unable to maintain the same attention level of students during lectures** - The effectiveness of the lecture method is only depending upon the attention level of students. Listening requires a huge amount of attention. Students are losing their attention level very quickly because they are only playing the role of listeners. If they lose their attention, they will not acquire knowledge very well. The lecture method makes the study boring and dry. When the study becomes dry, the attention level of students automatically decreases. So, lectures are unable to maintain the attention throughout the class.
- **No scope for psycho-motor objectives** - The Lecture method does not have the scope for psychomotor objectives such as physical skills and actions. The lecture method primarily focused on the transmission of information and

theoretical understanding of law without practical engagement. When students are physically involved in legal education like participating in moot court and role-playing. It will increase their understanding of the law. Psycho-motor learning in law can be achieved in other methods of teaching such as role-playing and stimulation method of teaching.

- **Requires well-trained and skilled educators for teaching** - The lecturer is the center of knowledge sharing. He should possess strong communication skills, content mastery, the ability to present complex legal concepts clearly, and the expertise to deliver the lecture based on the interest of the students. Skilled educators also need to adopt new strategies for effectively conveying the lecture. He can use examples, storytelling, and different tones of voice during the lecture. All these tasks and abilities can be effectively possessed by trained and skilled lecturers. Training schemes and centers need to train teachers for effective lectures.
- **Heavy teaching load on teachers** - Being the teacher-centric approach, Students depend on the teacher very much in the teaching method. Before giving lectures, they need to clearly understand the legal concepts and principles and they are required to find an effective way of presentation. Further, they also update their knowledge before making the lecture. While giving lectures, they are required to maintain the attention of the students and clarify the doubts if any raised by the listeners. All this leaves a heavy load on teachers.
- **It is not suitable for show-learners** - The lecture method of teaching is considered one of the time-saving methods of teaching. This makes the lecture method difficult for slow learners. During the lecture, the primary aim of the lecturer is to cover the subject matter of the study in the limited given time. Once he starts his lecture, he will only stop in the time of doubt or in the end. No special attention is given to show-learners. So, this method is not suitable for slow learners.

- **Very little scope for students' critical thinking** - There is less opportunity for analyzing and integrating information actively into the brains of the students. Critical thinking over the law is effectively possible during discussion, problem-solving, and debates. The lecture method has less scope for it. There is only a mere transfer of knowledge from lecturer to listener. Problem problem-solving method, discussion method, and stimulation method improve the Critical thinking of students.
- **Students are obligated to take notes even though they are not understanding the lecture** - Listeners are not always able to take notes with full understanding. Usually, lectures are fast. While making fast lectures, students struggle with understanding and note-taking. There is no time left to understand the concept better. If they take time to understand the lecture, they will have no time for taking notes. This circumstance leads to taking notes without understanding the content of the study.

VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In legal education, the lecture teaching method needs to adapt strategies such as the Interdisciplinary approach, the reaction papers method and role-playing method, the Bi-lingual way of lecture, and also providing breaks during lectures to promote practical skills, student engagement, and encouraging critical thinking.

- **Interdisciplinary Approach** - The Bar Council of India has recommended[12] The interdisciplinary approach needs to be followed in legal education. An interdisciplinary approach in legal education is very needed because the law does not operate in a vacuum. It operates in society. It makes an impact on the social, Economic, and political spheres. So, teaching interdisciplinary subjects like sociology, economics, and political science is important for legal education.
- **Using the Reaction papers method** - Reaction papers are the direct reflection of the personal thoughts of the students regarding the lecture. It enables them

[12] Bar Council of India, LE Circular-06/2024, BCID-0468-2024 (dated on 20.05.2024)

to think critically about the subject matters taught by lecturers. It promotes cooperation between the "hand", "heart" and "head" of the students. The personal feelings of the students are totally ignored in the lecture method of teaching. Making them write about their personal feeling regarding the class will reflect their learning[13]. This acts as the feedback. When students disclose their real views about lectures, it will be useful to lecturers to enrich their teaching further.

- **Adopting role-playing method** - Role-playing adoption in the lecture method increases the learning interest of students. Role-playing provides practical experience to the students regarding legal procedures and professions, such as moot courts, mock trials, client interviews, and so on. While students are involved in role-playing, they will apply their minds to turning their theoretical knowledge into practical usage. Role-playing acts as the trial ground for their profession.
- **Give a break during the lecture** - Studies show that students can maintain focus effectively for about 20 minutes. After that, their attention naturally decreases. Therefore, incorporating short breaks every 20 minutes during lectures can help recharge their attention and maintain concentration levels[14]. It gives the chance to process and organize newly learned information. This process helps students to acquire knowledge from lectures. One popular method is called the Pomodoro Technique, which provides 5 minute break for every 25 minutes of work[15].
- **Bi-lingual way of lecture** - When students receive information in their native language, they are better equipped to understand complex concepts, their

[13] Manuela Renáta Grosu, The Role of Innovative Teaching and Learning Methods in Legal Education, in International Conference the Future of Education 3 (2011), https://conference.pixel-online.net/conferences/edu_future/common/download/Paper_pdf/ITL34-Grosu.pdf (last visited Dec 27, 2024).

[14] Anil S S, Learning & Listening Capacity of Human Beings, Ayruz Data Marketing: Data Driven Digital Marketing and Analytics Agency (2014), https://ayruz.com/how-the-learning-capacity-of-human-beings-vary-listening-to-long-lectures/ (last visited Dec 27, 2024).

[15] What is The Pomodoro® Technique, https://www.pomodorotechnique.com/what-is-the-pomodoro-technique.php (last visited Dec 27, 2024).

brains only have the role to process such knowledge which they hear during lectures. But when they receive information in a other language than their native language, their brain needs to translate that information into their native language first. Afterward, only it can absorb the knowledge. Research indicates that utilizing a native language in educational contexts enables learners to process information more thoroughly[16], when lecturing in the native language of students in which they are fluent, they are more inclined to participate actively, ask questions, and engage in discussions, which contributes to improved overall academic performance. This method also reduces barriers associated with language anxiety and stress, which can hinder learning in non-native languages[17]. The Bar Council of India has recommended bilingual study of law in all the teaching instructions. It recommended that "To enhance access to justice and minimize delays, institutions offering law education must endeavor to provide bilingual education, using both English and the Regional/Bilingual Language as per National Educational Policy[18]".

VIII. CONCLUSION

The lecture method of teaching is an effective method for law teaching. But, being an age-old method, it requires new technological updates. Using PowerPoints, Overhead projection, and so on will increase the effectiveness of the lecture method. Further, combining other methods of teaching such as the stimulation method, role-playing method, discussion method, and field visit method along with the lecture method will give expected fruits in legal education.

[16] Deborah Smith Bailey, Therapy Is Twice as Effective in Clients' Native Language, https://www.apa.org, Feb. 1, 2007, https://www.apa.org/monitor/feb07/therapy (last visited Dec 28, 2024).
[17] Zoltán Dörnyei, Psychology and Language Learning: The Past, the Present and the Future, Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning 29 (2019), available at https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1352643.pdf (last visited Dec 28, 2024).
[18] Supra note 12.

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